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ABSTRACT

Papers on the role and services of African libraries and the education of African librarians, which were presented at the 1983 International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) conference, include: (1) "The Information Sector in the Economic Development of Africa: The Potential Role for Libraries," in which Benzies Y. Boadi (Nigeria) outlines African problems in information processing, the failure of library and information systems to provide user-oriented library services, and the need for and examples of national and regional library coordination; (2) "The Industrial Development Decade for Africa 1980-1990: Its Implications for the Library and Information Services of Eastern, Central, and Southern Africa," in which Peter Moll (United Kingdom) examines the prospects for the creation of an infrastructure to support electronic information systems through the Pan-African Documentation and Information System (PADIS) in the subregion designated as East Africa; and (3) "La Formation Professionnelle des Bibliothecaires Documentalistes dans un Monde Technologique: l'Exemple de la Tunisie" (Professional Training of Information Scientists in a Technological World: The Example of Tunisia)," in which Abdelhamid El Ajmi (Tunisia--paper in French) describes the development and current status of 4-year and 2-year educational programs for information scientists, librarians, and archivists in Tunisia, with emphasis on instruction in the use of information technology and automated systems at the Institut de Presse et des Sciences de l'Information de Tunis (IPSI) and the Institut Superieur de la Documentation (ISD). (ESR)

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The Information Sector in the Economic Development in Africa: The Potential Role for Libraries

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THE INFORMATION SECTOR IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA: THE POTENTIAL ROLE FOR LIBRARIES

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While delivering the annual Aggrey-Fraser-Guggisberg Memorial Lecture at the University of Ghana in 1968, the late renowned economist, Sir William Arthur Lewis asked, with characteristic poignancy, why it was that the African farmer produced seven hundredweight of maize from an acre instead of thirty hundredweight, and why half the calves born to his cows died within their first eighteen months. It was for lack of information, he proffered.(1) Information is the means by which the developing nations can raise their gross national product, raise the standard of living for their citizens and narrow the gap between them and the developed nations.

The closing of the gap will depend on how well the accumulated store of information can be harnessed to solve the social and economic problems. As Simon Kuznets, another eminent economist has said, economic growth of all countries depends on the effective utilisation of this store of information in developmental activities.(2) Again, Unesco's world-wide declaration of information as a national resource is a strong affirmation of the importance of information to economic development.

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The mere declaration of information as a national resource will, of course, not translate it into one. Like the other generally accepted resources, the national information resource has to be carefully organised and utilised to be of any use at all. The inadequacy (or in some cases the total lack) of the appreciation of the vital role of information to national development underlies the equal lack of appreciation for the mobilisation and use of the accumulated national store of information. Although, as with the different national economies, African countries vary in the levels of development of their library and information resources, Africa as a whole is intrinsically not as information poor as it is often assumed. Studies into the availability of document resources support this.(3) In other words, a substantial amount of information is already available in its "raw" form. What Africa basically lacks are the mechanisms for the "processing" of the raw material into a "consumable" product. What are also lacking are articulate policies for the use of the "product" in developmental projects - hence Sir Arthur Lewis' "lack of information" answer to his rhetorical question about the African farmer.

The proper organisation of the information resources and their effective use will contribute to the upliftment of the economic and social image of Africa. In this, the African library and information services have an important role to play. A vital source of information for national development programmes, for instance, are the various reports issued by

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the central governments and their departments and agencies. These are documents which contain statistical information or "hard facts" which are invaluable for sound planning. Most often, however, there are no systematic programmes for the collection, analysis and dissemination of the information they contain and the potential users, the decision-makers, remain unaware of their existence. A case in point is a recent study commissioned by the National Library of Nigeria into the information utilisation pattern of Nigerian policy-makers. The study has shown that the majority of the policy-makers (in the Federal Civil Service) do not seek information resources that would be relevant to them in their decision-making or policy-formulation processes.(4) This is a situation that would find its parallel in the other African countries.

This low degree of information consciousness may be due, at least in part, to the cultural and educational heritage of the potential information users. But it is also a reflection on the type of service that the African library and information systems are providing. The pertinent question here is whether as providers of information the librarians and information workers are offering services that are geared to the true needs of the users. User studies have so far not played any significant part in the services provided. This is a question therefore to which most of our librarians and information workers may not be able to give an affirmative answer. But if it is considered that the user is the ultimate beneficiary of the services then it stands to reason that the identification

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and satisfaction of his needs should be the primary objective of the services. The needs will vary - from those of the policy-maker to those of the farmer. However, individual needs cumulate into national needs and the provision of information to solve individual needs would therefore also cumulate into the solution of bigger national issues. The National Library of Nigeria's study into the information utilisation behaviour of Nigerian policy-makers could not have been a better start towards the provision of user-oriented information for that group of potential users. Similar studies into the other sectors of the community, and the actual provision of services to meet the identified needs, would be a challenging as well as a rewarding experience for the Nigerian library and information profession.

The failure of the library and information systems to provide user-oriented service is clearly an under-utilisation of the available information resources. The extent of under-utilisation is even magnified with the continued inability of the services to know the relative quantity and quality of the total national information resource. The mobilisation of the resources for effective organisation and use cannot be possible without accurate knowledge of what is available. Attempts to document what is nationally available through the compilation of such locational devices as union lists and catalogues, etc. have been patchy and unco-ordinated mainly because they have lacked national support. They have generally been undertaken

out of the resources of the libraries which have cared enough to accept the responsibility of compiling them. In situations where the resources are already limited their compilation runs into difficulties and the services are the poorer as a consequence.

Because of ineffective national co-ordination, or the total absence of it, similar activities that need to be undertaken co-operatively to enhance the maximum utilisation of the resources are either nominal or non-existent. Co-operative acquisition schemes have been tried with disappointing results and inter-library lending programmes have in most cases proved equally unsuccessful. These attempts in themselves are an expression of a felt need for the rationalisation of the services through the elimination of avoidable duplication and the concentration of efforts towards the provision of an effective service. However, the attempts have tottered or failed because the administrative, financial and technical problems involved have been those whose solution would have stood a better chance if they had been approached at the national level.

All these attempts and failures point to the need for a service that is co-ordinated and in which all the libraries contribute to a library and information service that is national in character. A primary necessity in this regard would be the establishment of independent national co-ordinating bodies, created by legislation and given adequate legal, administrative

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and financial support to plan and implement the services. The steps already taken in this direction by the United States of America, the United Kingdom and some of the other developed countries are an index to the future pattern of library and information service provision. Some of the African countries have either established national co-ordinating bodies (e.g. Ghana and Liberia) or are in the process of doing so (e.g. Nigeria). Those that have been established so far are without legislative backing and neither are they independent. Being appendages of other institutions and with no definite and adequate legal, financial and administrative support it is difficult to see how these handicaps will permit them to function effectively. A re-designation of these bodies would be an essential condition for the successful co-ordination of the national services.

Another essential condition for the success of the services is the availability of trained staff to plan and implement the programmes. Manpower shortage is a perennial issue which needs determined national approach. Staff education and training programmes should be based on analyses of the manpower resources and should be pursued systematically to ensure the availability of the required staff.

The attention so far has been concentrated on activities at the national level. But there are opportunities also for regional and sub-regional exploitation and use of the information resources. However, close attention at the national level

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is important because the successful implementation of regional and sub-regional activities would depend on the effective co-ordination of national services. Co-ordination at the regional or sub-regional level would of necessity be different from that at the national level. Co-operative acquisition schemes, for instance, may be unsuitable and indeed unrealistic at the regional or sub-regional level. But the scheme could be varied and each country could, for example take on the responsibility of ensuring a comprehensive collection of the national literary output and making any requested documents available through properly constituted national inter-library loan channels.

There are other areas which could lend themselves to regional or sub-regional co-ordination. Education and staff exchange programmes come readily to mind. As in the case of national co-ordination there would, even more so, be the need for a formal organisation to provide a forum for the planning and implementation of the programmes. The need for such an organisation is too apparent to require any elaboration. All the same it might be useful to give an illustration. In 1975 a meeting of West African agricultural librarians and documentalists was held at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan, Nigeria, to launch the West African centre for AGLINET (World-wide Network of Agricultural Libraries) and to stimulate co-operation among agricultural libraries and documentation centres in West Africa. Certain institutions were appointed as country centres to co-ordinate activities within the participating countries and also to liaise with the

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regional centre at IITA. It was decided at the meeting that, as an important tool for co-operation, and also to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and success of AGLINET, each country was to compile a national union list of agricultural periodicals. These would cumulate into a West African union list of agricultural periodicals to be held at the regional centre.(5) Nothing much has come out of this resolution and without a concrete co-ordinating mechanism such useful co-operative ventures may forever remain resolutions.

For West Africa, the establishment of the Economic Community of West African States(ECOWAS) in 1975 has provided the library and information services in the sub-region an avenue for the promotion of sub-regional programmes. As a sub-regional organisation which is concerned with the furtherance of the economic and social development of its members, ECOWAS would seem the most appropriate body to undertake the co-ordination of the sub-regional library and information activities. And for East, Central and Southern Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), strategically situated in Ethiopia, could be the co-ordinating agency for those sub-regions. Indeed, the ECA already has the nucleus of a pan-African information service. The Pan-African Documentation and Information Service (PADIS) was created in 1980 to establish data banks and to provide a computerised information service. PADIS plans to establish sub-regional centres to which national centres would be linked. At the moment Morocco, Algeria,

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Tunisia, Egypt and Senegal have operational national centres, while the national centres for Cameroon, Zaire, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Ivory Coast and Kenya are soon to be ready.(6)

These developments augur well for the future. But it is important to draw the attention of the various national governments to the vital role they also have to play to ensure the success of these programmes. In their Working Document, the International Conference on the Planning of National Documentation and Archives Infrastructures (Paris, 1974) declared that: "In the present age only governments have the opportunity and the resources to create conditions for the functioning of a national system for information transfer that meets the needs of the whole community."(7) This is because the total information process (i.e. its generation, collection, storage, processing, dissemination and utilisation) has become so complex that only governments have the overall capability to encompass its complexity. It is for this reason (and for the assurance of the efficient organisation and utilisation of the available information resources) that Unesco's General Information Programme has advocated the formulation and implementation of national information policies that reflect the needs of all sectors of the economy, and the integration of such policies with national development plans.

Neelameghan(8) has gone further to suggest the creation of an "information sector" in national development plans - just as there are separate sectors and budgets for agriculture, industry, science and technology, education, and the other

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recognised sectors of the economy. None of the various African governments has such an articulate information policy and these recommendations, which are being echoed here, are directed to them as the sole authorities capable of implementing them. They are also the authorities who can encourage and support national and international systems designed for the effective management of information - the resource on which all other resources depend for their development.

Another aspect which needs stressing is the committed participation and involvement of the various national library associations in these development programmes. Their role will become increasingly important with the planning and implementation of plans for the nationally co-ordinated organisation and use of the library and information resources. Their expertise would be needed in the drafting of national information policies, and their representation on the various specialist committees that would be set up would be very important. There are also several public relations activities in which the associations could engage to promote an understanding among policy-makers and the public at large. It has been remarked that "librarians in general talk too much to each other and not enough to influential policy makers. The way needs to be found to do it, when it does not yet exist."(9) One way in doing this is getting the policy formulators, the decision-makers and the administrators involved in the affairs of the profession and thereby getting them to appreciate the importance of information to national development. The (British) Library

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Association has, for example, been able to arrange quarterly meetings with the minister responsible for library and information services, it has established useful contacts with interested members of parliament, it holds regular meetings with the appropriate civil servants, local government officials, etc. This is a strategy which the various library associations in Africa would also find useful.

If all this has sounded like a catalogue of problems facing the library and information services in Africa, it may also be looked at as a catalogue of opportunities for the services. For quite some time now librarians and information workers have been clamouring for the recognition of information as an essential element to social and economic development. Slowly but perceptively the concept is being accepted. It is for the library and information profession to quicken the pace of acceptance and by that contribute more effectively to the social and economic development and growth of Africa. The opportunities abound - ours is to utilise them.

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The industrial development decade for Africa 1980-1990: its implications for the library and information services of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa

by

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The Industrial Development Decade for Africa 1980-1990: its implications for the library and information services of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa.

Peter Moll

This paper was originally conceived as a direct response to two papers delivered to the 1982 IFLA General Conference in Montreal. In the first, Professor Lancaster[1a] was responding to Mme. Cartier's Keynote Address on the social implications of the new technologies by assuming his familiar role as advocate for a coning age of electronic publication and distribution of information. He turned briefly to its impact on the developing countries by admitting that economic, technological and cultural barriers would prevent them from benefitting from these revolutionary changes, at present, but he pointed out that the Third World is already "information disadvantaged" and would probably remain so until it had access to the data bases of the developed world through electronic networks. He assumed that satellite communications would have made them possible by the year 2000 and that the prestige attached to them would attract more foreign aid and government funds than conventional library services. He cited the development of PADIS (The Pan-African Documentation and Information System) as a pointer to the future.

The second paper, "Regional and sub-regional clearing houses for library activities in the Third World", was presented to the Africa Section by Miss S.P.C. N'Jie and Mr. J.A. Dosunmu. They made particular reference to the needs of the West African sub-region and the benefits of networking at that level, with PADIS in Addis Ababa acting as a coordinating

clearing house for the four African sub-regions.

Lancaster / raised some interesting issues, but they can only be properly examined in relation to a specific region, or even sub-region, of the world. This paper will consider what prospects exist for the creation of the infrastructure needed to support electronic communication systems, whether the political will exists for both donor nations and African governments to devote to them the funds necessary for their establishment and proper maintenance; and how African librarians view the possibility of information technology coming to their LIS (library and information services). It identifies a more positive attitude as to the value of information for nation-building in recent development programmes and statements by decision-makers, than hitherto, apparently partly attributable to the promise of PADIS. It challenges librarians to respond to this change.

Before proceeding further a little must be said about the PADIS project, the details of which are not so widely known as its potential importance deserves. Phase I (1980-81) established the administration and computer centres at UNECA (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa) Headquarters, Addis Ababa, and the link with the EURONET network in Europe. Phase II (1982-84) is to include the implementation of a Pan-African Data Bank and the establishment of sub-regional computer centres connected by satellite in PADIS-NET, but its progress is hampered by the unevenness of the infrastructure available. Phase III (1985-89) is intended to extend PADIS-NET into all countries in the system (about 50). Compatibility with other UN information systems is assured and various services are already available. User education has a high priority and PADIS also offers advice on the organisation, staffing and equipment of information services.

It is always advisable to define a geographical area under discussion (Malawi, alone, has in different contexts been included in Eastern, Central or Southern Africa). This paper follows N'Jie and Dosumnu in accepting the division of Africa into the PADIS sub-regions of North, West, Central and East Africa. The latter includes the Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Réunion, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Although this paper will not attempt to cover individual developments in each of those very diverse countries, the list demonstrates the problems of trying to plan for a geographical sub-region and, more especially, to encourage cooperation between library and information services within

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it.Both these tasks must be attempted,or else nation-building will be held back for many countries by continuance of the dependency on the industrialised world created in their colonial past,with legacies of different European languages and cultures sometimes dividing related peoples. With planning and cooperation,these varied legacies can be used in the field of information transfer in a common service,as I hope to demonstrate.

As this paper is basically to do with the development of communications in East Africa and the implications of regional attempts at technical change, it now turns to the programmes for the ATCD (African Transport and Communications Decade, I978-88) to see what contributions LIS were making to it and what benefits would accrue to them from it. The ATCD was launched in 1977 on the initiative of the Ministerial Meeting of the ECA (Economic Commission for Africa - the UN body in Addis Ababa which advises on economic and technological development).This followed recognition by the Conference on International Economic Cooperation (1975-7) that African development was largely being retarded by poor transport and communications infrastructure. The first phase of the ATCD, from I980 to I983, was to cost an estimated eight thousand million dollars,half of which was to go on roads and road transport,including the building of the Cairo-Gaborone Trans-East Africa Highway covering 3I,500 km. and having 43,000 km. of feeder roads.Further support was to be given to the completion of PANAFTEL (the Pan-African Telecommunication Network - the gradual spread of satellite technology, now given a boost by the UN's World Communications Year,I983).This is planned to cover the whole of Africa with over 3,000 multiplex channels in one vast network - most telecommunications links in the past have been between African

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countries and the capital cities of their former colonial rulers and neighbouring states have often had to communicate via London or Paris. There are now telephone, telex and telegraph links between Botswana, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Moreover, many African countries have built, or are planning for, satellite earth stations to give them access to global communications systems at costs independent of distance. The idea for a World Communications Year originated in Africa and the UN chose 1983 for it as being the mid-point of the ATCD.

It might appear from the foregoing that Lancaster's millenial forecasts for Africa are likely to be on target, yet in discussions about the prospects for information technology in their own LICs, African librarians frequently show doubts about its real possibilities for nation-building and the absence of a specific role for the LIS in these plans and developments. The LIS should be able to benefit greatly from direct access to international information systems and improved facilities for document-delivery within Africa, while these benefits should, in turn, enhance the contributions that LIS might make towards national development, yet national development plans in Africa have rarely given LIS much consideration. Recent plans might make some shadowy reference to PADIS, but without significant national inputs it would be as ineffective as the Trans-East Africa Highway without feeders. However, librarians' unease also stems from fears that devoting massive sums to high technology might be diverting resources from more basic needs. Access to information is impeded for millions of Africans by illiteracy, linguistic divisions, dependency on foreign sources of material and the lack of sufficient funds and trained manpower for public libraries, particularly in rural areas. In short, many African librarians may not associate high technology solutions with the familiar problems they encounter in trying to build up satisfactory LIS on traditional lines, from a low base.

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The introduction of the new technologies will not necessarily reduce the gap between the information-rich and the information-poor within Africa. (A British Telecom official has commented on the results of the growth in the number of satellite earth stations by saying that much of the 40% increase that has recently occurred in telephone "traffic" out of Africa was due to expatriates taking advantage of concessionary rates introduced at off-peak hours). As Colin Cherry has said:

> "Technology is a means not an end; it offers new choice of action and compels us to make decisions and to decide priorities. It is in this sense that technology, communication technology above all, is a political matter."[2]

While professional librarians must work within the policy frameworks established by politicians and the decision-makers superior to them in their organisations or governing bodies, it is their duty to encourage wider access to information and better uses of it. Whatever technology is available should be used. African librarians who have gained firsthand experience of information technologies develop ambivalent views. During a series of postgraduate talks and seminars on International Librarianship, at Loughborough University of Technology, a mainly African group of students found that a recurring reason for the inadequacies of their LIS was their lack of "professional clout" or influence. One of them from East Africa summed it up by saying that his library services "need better government support both financially and legally", but he did not indicate how this might have been obtained. In answer to a questionnaire on possible applications of automation in their own countries, they largely recognised the advantages of "speed and accuracy" and "international exchange of information" that computers could bring to their LIS, but were fearful of the staff redundancies that might attend their introduction and maintenance difficulties stemming from inadequate power supplies and/problematic stocks of spare parts (this

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reflects the increasing foreign debts of most African countries and their frequent imposition of tight controls over foreign exchange). One Nigerian unknowingly gave some support to Lancaster's predictions when he explained his (minority) view in favour of public library charges; "My people like prestigious things. If they have to register with some money ...(and) prestige elements are attached to membership people will be happy and proud to tell their friends." However, he hastened to add; "To accommodate the haves and have-nots the registration fee will not be very high." More common among the students was the view that library autonation was not a first priority for LIS in Africa and that "(development) funds are directed to economic projects". These views tended to reflect a lack of confidence in the vital role that LIS should have in nation-building.

It seems that libraries in East Africa need government support, but are unable to command the attention and funds devoted to prestigious communications projects. There seem to be two main problems here; firstly, persuading governments of the importance of information for development and the contributions that the LIS can make to improving its availability; secondly, making professional librarians themselves aware of their vital roles in nation-building and the need to involve themselves in the technical innovations that are attracting government support and attention. Information systems need men as well as machines and men may take longer to prepare for service. It is clearly imperative that all librarians should combine to strengthen their national library associations - the appropriate bodies to act both as professional pressure groups dedicated to encouraging wider access to information and its better use and as vehicles promoting professional education and training as a life-long process.

The rather discouraging outlook for LIS in Africa could be completely transformed during the 1980s if professionals are alert to technical change and grasp the opportunities now being presented to them by a new recognition by politicians and decision-makers of the importance of information for development in Africa. This has largely become apparent since the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action by the meeting of African Heads of State and

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Government in 1980. The UN General Assembly responded to this by declaring the IDDA (Industrial Development Decade for Africa 1980-1990). The ATCD also now forms part of the Lagos Plan.

The Lagos Plan is for the years 1980 to 2000 and gives industrial development in Africa equal importance to food and agricultural production, with an emphasis on import substitution. It is aimed at nation-building and reduced dependency on external trade and aid. The programme for the IDDA[3] was produced in accord with these principles by the UNECA, the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation and the Organisation for African Unity, jointly, and discussed at the 6th Conference of African Ministers of Industry in November 1981. In adopting its Framework, they concluded that a major factor in achieving the objectives of the Decade would be the "Dissemination of information on assistance from the United Nations Organizations and other International Bodies, especially through the Pan African Documentation and Information System..." (p.13) They recommended that equal attention be given to infrastructure, institutions, the environment, technology and "above all" manpower requirements; also that:

> "An information system should be set up which will promote the exchange of industrial and technical information among African countries with a view to enabling them to strengthen their bargaining positions and secure better terms for acquiring appropriate technology at reasonable cost." (p.7)

Again and again the programme refers to the need for information systems and it assigns roles to PADIS specifically, but also stresses the involvement of all sections of the information community. On the evaluation of development projects, it recommends:

> "The generation, collection, interpretation and dissemination of information involve various categories of people, and people interested in or affected by the project should be involved (in it)" (p.193)

An important role in "popularizing the Decade", during the preparatory phase (1982-1984), inside Africa and throughout the world, has been assigned to the international agencies. However, for their work to be effective they need the cooperation of "industrial enterprises, universities and public libraries." (p.187). The programme stresses the need for skilled collection and interpretation of information, as "Ill-managed information or information in the hands of incapable personnel fails to yield results" (p.176).

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The programme contains recommendations that each country set up a national coordinating committee for the Decade, including on it senior representatives of all interested government ministries, various public and private sectors and professional associations. LIS should be able to proffer advice on information matters through representatives from their governing bodies, but such people as the National Librarian and Chairman of the national Library Association should be claiming their own places on the coordinating committee. Meeting with leading members of other professional bodies, such as lawyers and engineers, probably for the first time all together, they may consider it opportune to plan the establishment of a Professional Centre. President Nyerere recently donated his Third World Prize (US$100,000) to help the one founded in Dar-es-Salaam in 1979. It now has 14 organisations in membership and aims: "to help strengthen and improve standards in the professions, to give specialists a chance to learn about the work of their fellows in other fields, and to aid national development".

The whole programme is permeated with recognition of the importance of information flow and it speaks with the highest authority when it states:

> "One of the pre-requisites for self-sustaining and self-reliant industrial development is the availability of industrial and technical information. ...This information has to be furnished to the decision-makers by national information institutions which may need to be established or strengthened...An appropriate framework for a national and technological information network with a well-defined focal point must be established" (47-8)

If librarians do not demonstrate their fitness and appropriateness to advise on and participate in their national networks, then the lead will come from elsewhere and they will be by-passed.

Since PADIS was created under the aegis of the ECA, at ECA headquarters, it may not be surprising to find its cause so strongly espoused in a programme which the ECA helped to draw up. Nevertheless, the hope and prestige attached to its implementation must have helped to persuade many African decision-makers of the importance and relevance of information networks on the continent. The PADIS Director has been a strong proponent of

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the need for libraries and documentation centres as places to collect, store and disseminate the information essential to develop in Africa.He considers that lack of them has contributed to the failure of so many reports and plans to be properly and successfully implemented.On the question of where a documentation and information policy should come in any order of priorities on the allocation of resources,he says:

"Documentation and information for economic and social development, numerical or non-numerical,automated or manual,which are needed for fast reliable and sure decision making,can not be ranked among the priorities.They are in fact a prerequisite without which it is futile to undertake any planning." [5a]

There may have been overlap,even conflict,between the aims of PADIS and the established work of Unesco,the major UN agency in information activities. There may also be a certain measure of misunderstanding and distrust between a new breed of African documentalists,well-versed in the new technologies, and many of the more traditionally trained librarians.However,it must be hoped that such difficulties are being resolved and that information workers throughout Africa are cooperating in the great task of nation-building. They must all agree with the "shopping-list"of items which the ECA's Executive Secretary has presented to every country in Africa,as parts of the support system for the national information centres envisaged under PADIS:

"a)Inclusion in the national plan of comprehensive information policy for documentation,library and archive services;

b)Creation of a co-ordinating body or focal point for documentation, library and archive services;

c)Preparation of a national plan for developing co-ordinated documentation, library and archive services;

d)Legislation to support establishment and development of information services already in existence;

e)Creation of a designated body responsible for planning and implementing documentation and archive services;

f)Establishment of a national bibliogaphic agency for ensuring

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bibliographic control of the national production;

g)Initiation of a bold manpower development programme in documentation and information system."[5b]

For librarians familiar with Unesco's General Information Programme that list may contain little new,but the ECA and PADIS are finding a newly receptive audience of African leaders and decision-makers for whom the needs of LIS may have only now become apparent.If they become convinced that LIS are"prerequisites" of development,rather than low priority services, then it is within their power to give effect to that comprehensive list of needs throughout Africa.The present picture is generally patchy and pitiful. The LIS will only earn the respect of national leaders if they work together, as the programme for the IDDA states:"The need for intra-African co-operation at the subregional and regional levels in industrial and technological information cannot be over-emphasized,"(p.58).Nowhere in Africa can this cooperation be necessary than in the nine countries of SADCC (the Southern African Development Coordination Conference).

SADCC has been described by Arthur Blumeris,its Executive Secretary,as: "a building block in the movement toward continental economic cooperation envisaged in the OAU's Lagos Plan of Action".[6] It was formally established in April 1980,a fortnight before Zimbabwe's independence,when the Lusaka Declaration was signed by the "frontline states"(Angola,Botswana,Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia)plus Lesotho,Malawi,Swaziland and Zimbabwe.PADIS includes Angola and Botswana in Central Africa,but all the rest in East Africa,while all are English-speaking except for the former Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique.(The particular European language and tradition an African country has inherited can be of great significance in intra-African library cooperation).SADCC's prime aims are to promote regional development and reduce economic dependency on South Africa. It is avowedly not a political organisation,however. One observer has noted:

"Greeted with some scepticism at the time of its foundation,SADCC has at least earned the respect of Western Governments and international aid agencies for its seriouness of purpose,sensibly limited objectives and refreshing lack of cant and political posturing."[7]

About 30 donor governments and 20 international aid organisations have been represented at ~~the~~ annual meetings with the members of SADCC, which is viewed by many of them as a test of "South-South" cooperation. Attendance at the 1981 meeting in Blantyre, Malawi, was somewhat smaller, but its agenda contained several items that could aid information flow in the region. One paper noted five challenges facing SADCC, two of which were : to improve communication of information essential to planning; and to enhance personnel training for SADCC projects. A paper by the Zimbabwean Government on food and agriculture proposed nine projects, including cooperation on: interchange of ideas and personnel; and exchange of information. The largest document concerned transport and telecommunications - projects standing the best chances of attracting immediate funds. SADCC's aims are essentially realistic and aimed at earliest results. For example, rather than wait for the completion of PANAFTEL the nine countries are being liked by less expensive microwave connections. The communications infrastructure is being improved, which should benefit cooperation between LIS in the region. Their greatest opportunity to prove their value in the development of the region might be by evolving a scheme of subject specialisation in accord with their individual countries' responsibilities to SADCC.

Each member of SADCC is responsible for regional research and project proposals within ~~...~~ sectors in which it already has an important interest. - Mozambique for transport and communications; Malawi for fisheries, wildlife and forests; Zimbabwe for food security and security printing of banknotes; and so on. It would be in both regional and national interests for LIS to build up strong collections of material (especially Africana) in their country's subject areas, as a basis for resource-sharing, and intra-member communications between major LIS should be improved. Mr. Sam Kotei is currently conducting an investigation for IFLA's Africa Section on the functions and manpower development programmes of "Library and Information Systems in Southern Africa". His report should assist cooperation in the area.

The development of national documentation and information centres should be encouraged, as these should eventually become local nodes for PADIS/NET, a continental network. The spin-offs for LIS in prestige and allocation of resources are obvious, although the actual collection-building might best be done at a special /or academic library or one attached to an interested government department. For example, the Malawi Government might allocate additional funds to the Fisheries Research Station Library at Monkey Bay, /on Lake Malawi, to meet its SADCC obligations, but decide that external communications with it should be routed via a national focal point at the Bunda College of Agriculture Library, near

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the Capital,Lilongwe. Some countries might establish a single national documentation and information centre,others might designate more ,according to subject area (e.g.one for agriculture and another for manufacturing industry and mines). The best libraries in Africa are often to be found in universities or some research institutions,with regrettably poor ones at government ministries, so it might be considered appropriate to establish a new national documentation service for the latter as an attachment to the Office of the President and Cabinet (or its equivalent).All national centres intended as nodes for international networks must be adequately funded,have staff development plans and have a programme for the enhancement of their telecommunications equipment, with the intention of ultimately having on-line access to PADIS and other international information systems.

There are a number of organisations uniting various groups of information workers in East Africa,such as for archivists and for academic librarians, while there is also a regional Council for Development of Information Systems and Services inspired by Unesco.However,one comprehensive group of particular interest to IFLA must be SCECSAL(the Standing Conference of Eastern,Central and Southern African Librarians),full membership of which is restricted to countries with national library associations.Its sixteen members include all the SADCC countries except Angola and like SADCC it aims at a minimum of bureaucracy.SCECSAL's main function has been to hold a biennial conference,financed and organised by the host library association, which assumes executive powers for the two years following it.SCECSAL was held in Malawi in 1982 and is to be in Zimbabwe in 1984.The Harare conference will no doubt find it opportune to discuss closer cooperation between LIS in SADCC, rhaps along the lines of resource-sharing suggested above.It is possible to envisage regional cooperation between all manners of LIS,particularly as regards staff training and education and inter-library loans,but public and educational libraries also would have an important role in publicising SADCC's aims.The Government of Zimbabwe is one that does recognise the value of information. It has recently had assistance on studies for an information system related to food,for example,while Dr.Chidzero's Opening Speech at the PADIS Meeting in Harare in 1981,as Minister of Economic Planning and Development, showed a determination to continue the development of Zimbabwe's already well-established LIS and to create a National Information and Documentation Centre.

Whether Lancaster's assumption that the whole of Africa could be connected to electronic communications networks by the year 2000 proves to be correct, or even whether the targets of the Lagos Plan have been achieved by then,are

not the most significant concerns of LIS in East Africa in the mid 1980s. The most important implication of the programme for the IDDA, for them, is that African leaders throughout the continent are coming to the realisation that the supply of information is a prerequisite for nation-building. It is now up to professional librarians in East Africa to show through their forward planning and cooperation that they are worthy of managing that information. The challenge is there.

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Abstract

Initially, a response to two IFLA 1982 papers, in which: Lancaster assumes that satellite communications and national prestige could make electronic networks accessible to the Third World by AD2000 (cites PADIS); N'Jie and Dosunmu discuss benefits of networking within West Africa, interacting also with PADIS. This paper examines the prospects for the creation of infrastructure to support electronic information systems in the East African sub-region of PADIS, whether the political will to fund them exists and whether African librarians view the transfer of information technology as desirable and/or imminent. It considers plans and operations undertaken within the ATCD, IDDA and SADCC and perceives a recognition by African leaders of information availability as a prerequisite for development, with transport and communications a priority sector for projects. PADIS appears to play a key role in this "conversion" of African leaders, a change of which librarians must be made aware and to which they must respond. SADCC gives them the opportunity to share their resources and display their expertise.

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La formation professionnelle des bibliothécaires documentalistes dans un monde technologique

par

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Tunis, Tunisie

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Section Afrique

/_A FORMATION PROFESSIONNELLE DES BIBLIOTHECAIRES DOCUMENTALISTES DANS UN MONDE TECHNOLOGIQUE : L'EXEMPLE DE LA TUNISIE.

Etude présentée au 49e conseil général de l'IFLA - Munich (RFA) 21-27 Août 1983 par M. ABDELHAMID EL AJMI, conservateur chef du département des périodiques de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Tunisie avec la collaboration de M. HASSINE BEN AZZOUNA.

INTRODUCTION :

Depuis ces dix dernières années, on ne cesse de constater l'évolution spectaculaire de la technologie de l'infromation ou "Télématique" et les possibilités qu'offre l'apparition de ces nouveaux moyens avancés à un traitement de l'information de plus en plus fiable et à une meilleure gestion de ce domaine.

En effet utilisée , depuis les années 70 seulement, l'informatique constitue la grande révolution dans le traitement, la production, le stockage , la recherche et la diffusion de l'information. Qui de nos jours, des plus spécialisés jusqu'à nos maitres d'écoles théologiques de quartier n'a pas regardé à la télévision ou entendu parler de cette "machine" magique, de ce "cerveau" electronique, mécanique qui, selon l'expression populaire, "obeit" à vos ordres et vous restitue tout ce que vous voulez rien qu'en la touchant?.

C'est que, la miniaturisation des ordinateurs, les progrès de la micro-électronique, et des télécommunications permettent de plus en plus aux institutions d'entrer dans cette nouvelle "ère" afin de maitriser la gestion quotidienne, rétrospective, voire future de leur domaine d'activités, et les bibliothèques n'échappent pas à cette règle : contenant des millions de données, références, notes, documents, statistiques etc... et étant obligées d'en collecter davantage chaque jour, elles ne trouvent pas d'autres moyens pour maitriser leurs secteurs

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que celui de l'ordinateur et le nombre de bibliothèques et centres de documentation automatisés ne cessent de croitre chaque jour.

C'est ainsi que la formation de spécialistes de la gestion automatisée a été rendue nécessaire.

Mais en Afrique, la question qui se pose est la suivante :

Le stade actuel de développement atteint par nos bibliothèques, l'état de nos écoles, de nos élèves et étudiants, la production imprimée dans chaque pays chaque année, tous ces facteurs justifient-ils le recours à la technologie moderne au prix d'adaptations coûteuses et qui pourraient être ou paraitre inutiles ? où se situent les priorités pour l'Afrique ? S'agit-il d'ignorer nos priorités au profit de la modernité "exigée" par l'ère de la technologie, de l'image etc... ou bien cette ère des techniques modernes constitue-t'elle notre "chance" pour atteindre un degré de développement supérieur ?

Autant de questions qui se posent aussi bien au décideur politique qu'aux professionnels à tous les niveaux.

Pour répondre à ces questions, il serait peut-être utile d'établir le "catalogue" des priorités dans chaque pays africain, de confronter les expériences et de tirer les conclusions qui se dégageraient d'un tel travail.

Plutôt qu'une étude dans ce sens; qui serait longue à réaliser, nous avons essayé de faire part de l'expérience tunisienne en matière d'enseignement de la documentation, de la bibliothéconomie et de l'archivistique (D.B.A.), de la place de l'enseignement des supports non-livres et de l'informatique documentaire dans cet enseignement, de présenter des axes de reflexion et des propositions relatives à ce thème général.

I. L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE LA D.B.A. EN TUNISIE : aperçu historique et stituation actuelle.

Tout enseignement de la Documentation, de la Bibliothèconomie et de l'Archivestique (D.B.A.) pose une problèmatique générale ayant plusieurs aspects :

1) L'organisation de l'enseignement de la D.B.A.

2) La nature de cet enseignement.

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3) La contenu et la finalité du dit enseignement.

I- Comment organiser cet enseignement ?

Il faut rappeler que l'objectif essentiel de cet enseignement est de former des cadres capables d'organiser l'information et de la transmettre à des utilisateurs de tous niveaux en tenant compte à chaque fois des caractéristiques particulières d'une Bibliothèque, d'un Centre de Documentation et d'une Unité d'archives. Il y a donc un choix à, faire entre un enseignement général dit intégré ("Integrated éducation") qui ne tient compte que de l'objectif final de cette formation en considérant que les trois spécialités sont étroitement liées, l'important étant de transmettre l'infromation aux utilisateurs respectifs, et un enseignement qui tient compte des particularités de chaque section et qui forme trois catégories distinctes de spécialistes.

II- Cet enseignement doit-il être théorique ou pratique ou les deux à la fois?

Dans ce dernier cas, faudra-t-il accorder une importance égale aux matières théoriques et aux matières pratiques ?

III- Quels sont les moyens de concilier l'urgence des besoins en cadres et la durée de l'enseignement ?

Autrement dit, faut-il opter pour un enseignement universitaire traditionnel qui fournirait de hauts cadres dans les trois spécialités sus-mentionnées et répondrait aux besoins du pays ? Et si l'on s'orientait vers une solution intermédiaire entre l'enseignement supérieur court et l'enseignement supérieur normal, il resterait à définir les besoins en cadres moyens et en cadres supérieurs. Pour répondre à toutes ces questions, il faut procéder à l'analyse des spécificités de l'enseignement général intégré et celle de l'enseignement spécialisé.

A/ L'Enseignement intégré :

Les étudiants suivant un enseignement unifié (D.B.A.) qui les prépare à travailler dans toute bibliothèquen unité d'archives ou tout centre de documentation. Cet enseignement exige un tronc commun unifié sans frotières entre les 3 spécialités et habitue les étudiants au travail bibliothèconomique "global" et ne peut être assuré que par des enseignants qui connaissent bien les trois spécialités.

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B/ L'Enseignement spécialisé au second cycle :

Il comprend deux cycles : un premier cycle général de base et un second cycle spécialisé soit en Documentation, en Bibliothèconomie ou en Archivistique.

C/ L'Enseignement spécialisé :

Il comprend trois spécialités nettement distinctes l'une de l'autre et découle de la nécessité de lier les bibliothèques au développement culturel et social, les centres de documentation au développement économique et les archives au développement de l'administration.

Cet enseignement, encore plus que l'enseignement intégré ou spécialisé au second cycle, nécessite un personnel enseignant universitaire spécialisé et une infrastructure adéquate.

Je profite de cette occasion pour demander à tous les pays africains d'entreprendre des études détaillées dans lesquelles ils délimiteraient leurs besoins immédiats et futurs dans les trois domaines sus-indiqués (D.B.A.), et d'oeuvrer à réunir toutes les conditions matérielles et humaines - personnel enseignant, équipement, programmation, etc... - nécessaires à la bonne marche et à la réussite d'un tel enseignement.

Pour résumer, disons que chaque pays africain où le problème de l'enseignement de la B.B.A. se pose aujourd'hui ou devra se poser d'ici l'an 2000, aurait à choisir entre les trois options suivantes :

- Enseignement intégré ou spécialisé.
- Enseignement théorique ou pratique.
- Cadres supérieurs ou cadres moyens.

IV- Quelle solution a été retenue en Tunisie pour l'enseignement de la D.B.A.?

Pour répondre à cette question ; il faudrait vous donner un bref aperçu sur l'évolution de cet enseignement en Tunisie depuis l'indépendance.

La première décennie de développement (1956-1966) a été consacrée à la formation de cadres nécessaires à la gestion du pays dans tous les domaines (formation d'instituteurs, ingénieurs, médecins, professeurs etc...), c'est-à-dire à l'enseignement. Le secteur des bibliothèques a été, par contre, le parent pauvre de cette

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décennie et n'a guère bénéficié de la priorité de développement qui aurait dû lui revenir de droit, d'où l'absence totale de programme d'enseignement de la D.B.A. en Tunisie durant la période 1956-1966.

Mais ce choix qui a permis la scolarisation de plus de 90 % des enfants en âge scolaire, a imposé de lui-même la révision de la place faite au secteur des bibliothèques jusqu'à cette date, car il s'est avéré qu'il n'était pas possible d'asseoir un enseignement moderne et de valeur sans bibliothèque et centres de documentation, outils indispensables à toute recherche scientifique et, plus généralement, à la diffusion de la culture parmi les masses. La prise de conscience de l'importance de la D.B.A. fut tardive et lente, mais elle permit, dès 1964, la formation rapide (durée : six mois) d'agents d'un niveau élémentaire. L'année suivante, un centre de formation professionnelle fut crée à la Bibliothèque Nationale de Tunis pour assurer la formation d'agents destinés aux bibliothèques publiques. Ce centre n'a cessé de fonctionner qu'en 1969.

Il va de soi que cette première tentative n'a été qu'un pis-aller et ne pouvait prétendre répondre aux besoins des centaines d'administrations et d'institutions économiques créées depuis l'indépendance. Devant ce manque continu de cadres, la formation a été confiée à l'Ecole Nationale d'Administration (E.N.A.) qui a mis sur pied, pour la première fois, un programme d'enseignement de bibliothèconomie dans le pays, L'E.N.A. eut le mérite de former plus de 300 bibliothécaires-adjoints qui ont permis à certaines administrations et ministères de gérer et d'organiser leurs documents. Le contenu du programme étant axé sur les matières techniques, l'administration constituait le seul débouché aux élèves de l'E.N.A. D'ailleurs, le diplôme qui leur était délivré n'avait pas de caractère universitaire et ne permettait pas à ceux qui en étaient titulaires de poursuivre des études supérieures. Ceci eut des effets négatifs sur la profession que tout le monde confinait au niveau moyen (bibliothècaire-adjoint) puisque seuls quelques étudiants ont réussi à poursuivre des études post-universitaires en D.B.A. à l'étranger.

Ainsi donc, entre 1964 et 1979, n'étaient en partie satisfaits que les besoins des administrations. Ces dernières avaient réussi à recruter des agents

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qui étaient chargés d'organiser et, en conséquence, d'exploiter la documentation administrative. Comme les programmes étaient axés essentiellement sur l'acquisition, le catalogage et l'indexation des documents, seul le niveau moyen était pris en considération par les pouvoirs publics.

Cependant, au cours de cette période, l'enseignement a réussi à être polyvalent, malgré le manque d'enseignants d'Archivistique et les étudiants qui ont reçu cette formation ont pu travailler dans des bibliothèques, des centres de documentation ou des unités d'archives sans grande difficulté.

Quel rôle a joué l'Institut de Presse et des Sciences de l'Information de Tunis (I.P.S.I.) dans la formation des documentalistes, bibliothécaires et archivistes ? Quelle programmation et quels choix ont été retenus ?

— L'Enseignement de la D.B.A. à l'I.P.S.I. comporte :

- Une formation en 4 ans : Maîtrise en D.B.A.
- Une formation en 2 cycles universitaires distincts.

1ère catégorie : la formation en 4 ans : Maîtrise en D.B.A.

Il s'agit d'un programme évolutif, unifié et bien structuré, étalé sur quatre (4) années universitaires couronnées par une maîtrise en D.B.A. Au cours des deux premières années, l'étudiant reçoit un enseignement général en D.B.A. axé sur l'aspect technique et pratique, ce qui lui permettra, éventuellement de travailler comme bibliothécaire-adjoint.

Un expert de l'Unesco a pu constater le bon niveau des programmes et leur structure unifiée : on peut affirmer sans crainte que les problèmes sont dûs non au contenu de ce programme de 4 ans, mais à l'idée qu'avait chaque enseignant de la matière dont il avait la responsabilité.

2ème catégorie : la formation en 2 ans -2 cycles distincts :

Comme les besoins du marché de l'emploi dépassent largement le nombre des futurs diplômes de l'I.P.S.I., il a fallu trouver une solution rapide qui permette de doubler le nombre d'étudiants titulaires d'une maîtrise en bibliothèconomie d'où la possibilité offerte aux étudiants ayant accompli avec succès leurs études de premier cycle dans d'autres disciplines telles que l'histoire, les langues, les

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sciences etc... de préparer cette spécialité.

Le contenu des programmes réservés à cette catégorie d'étudiants insiste surtout sur laspect technique aux dépens de l'aspect culturel, car ils ont déjà acquis au cours de leurs études universitaires précédentes un niveau de culture générale pouvant les dispenser des matières théoriques.

3ème Catégorie : L'Institut Supérieur de la Documentation (I.S.D.).

Formation des Cadres moyens en 2 ans.

L'enseignement à l'IPSI cherche essentiellement à former des cadres supérieurs titulaires de la maîtrise. D'ailleurs, le 1er cycle en D.B.A. à été élevé, car ces cadres jouent un rôle important dans l'accomplissement des tâches techniques quotidiennes. D'où la création de l'Institut Supérieur de la Documentation (I.S.D.) en Octobre 1981 sous l'égide du Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique. Cet institut supérieur spécialisé qui ne compte aujourd'hui qu'une centaine d'étudiants, va essayer de pourvoir au besoins du pays en cadres moyens le plus rapidement possible. L'enseignement qu'il offre à ses étudiants consiste en une formation technique moyenne (2 ans après le bacalauréat) couronnée par un diplôme de bibliothécaire-adjoint. Seuls les étudiants ayant obtenu une bonne moyenne sont autorisés à poursuivre leurs études au 2ème cycle en vue d'obtenir la maîtrise en D.B.A.

Cette création récente de l'I.S.D. constitue une autre évolution dans le domaine de la documentation en Tunisie : la volonté d'en finir avec les solutions provisoires et de valoriser le secteur de la D.B.A. en lui donnant définitivement un caractère universitaire.

L'I.S.D. continuera à former des cadres moyens mais, comme nous l'avons déjà signalé, la modification des programmes dès cette année laisse déjà entrevoir la création d'un second cycle à l'institut dans un avenir proche. L'ISD qui va assurer la formation de cadres moyens à court terme, devra prochainement fournir au pays des cadres diplômés en DBA. L'ISD qui profitera des expériences antérieures en matière d'enseignement de la DBA sera, à notre avis, probablement la solution qu'aura trouvé la Tunisie pour la formation des bibliothécaires, documentalistes

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et archivistes d'ici à l'an 2000.

Telle est la situation actuelle de l'enseignement de la D.B.A. en Tunisie, mais devant les changements qui s'opèrent dans la technologie de l'information, de la communication, quelle est la part faite à ces nouveaux moyens, c'est-à-dire aux "machines".

Il n'est pas dans notre objectif ici de présenter une étude comparative du contenu des programmes de toutes les années et dans les deux instituts;ce serait trop long, mais de présenter un bref aperçu de la place, des caractéristiques et de l'importance de l'enseignement des supports non-livres et de l'information documentaire.

II L'ENSEIGNEMENT DES SUPPORTS NON-LIVRES

Pour chacun d'entre nous, l'école a enraciné l'idée que le message écrit prime et doit être la base de toute recherche, de tout développement ou travail. L'école n'a jamais pris en considération que nous vivons l'ère de l'image. Pour les programmes scolaires, le message visuel n'existe pas ; il est presque incapable de communiquer des informations détaillées et precises.

Retrouve-t-on cette vérité dans l'enseignement de la documentation dans nos écoles ? Le langage visuel a-t-il sa place parmi les autres langages que dispensent nos écoles de bibliothéconomie ?

Alors qu'ils occupent une grande place dans notre quotidien : La radio, la télévision, la cassette, le disque, l'estampe, ont-ils leur place dans nos écoles en général et nos écoles de bibliothéconomie en particulier.

La littérature consacrée à ces canaux est abondante et variée ; elle est soit théorique et abstraite : analyse d'une oeuvre artistique, plastique d'un film etc... ou trop technique : composition électronique, fiches d'appareillages, mode d'emploi, notices de fabrication.

Actuellement, au niveau de l'enseignement primaire et l'enseignement secondaire, il n'y a pas de véritable initiation au message véhiculé par les nouveaux médias, ni à la manipulation de ces médias. Seuls sont (très peu) initiés les élèves des classes techniques au niveau du baccalauréat, et on ne peut parler d'ensei-

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gnement appliqué à l'image et au son. Il n'existe donc pas de véritable enseignement ni au primaire, ni au secondaire, ni à l'université.

La situation se caractérise aussi par :

- L'inexistence de "médiathèque" organisée, où les étudiants pourraient entrer en contact direct avec ces nouveaux moyens techniques et "pratiquer" l'audio-visuel.

- l'absence de programmes qui permettent de rendre ces moyens utiles pour la majorité des populations.

- l'inaccessibilité matérielle de ces moyens techniques pour tous (valeur marchande).

- l'inexistence de normes pour l'enseignement des moyens audio-visuels.

En même s'il s'en trouve des personnes initiées ou conscientes de l'importance de l'audio-visuel et de l'enseignement approprié à ce secteur, elles le sont dans le cadre d'activités personnelles au sein de maisons de culture, clubs culturels, maisons de jeunes, cinéastes amateurs, ciné clubs, club de musique...

Les bibliothécaires eux, entrés à l'IPSI et à l'ISD, n'ont jamais d'idées précises ou clairement fixées sur la technologie et le message audio-visuels.

Au cours de leur formation, ils n'ont que de vagues notions sur ce vaste secteur.

Les personnes initiées peuvent-elles remplacer les bibliothécaires et être à l'avant-garde pour la défense de l'urgence de créer un enseignement des non-livres ? Nous ne le pensons guère ; car la mission du bibliothécaire-documentaliste est de collecter méthodiquement, de traiter scientifiquement et objectivement les documents non-livres et ceux d'entre eux qui font appel à une technologie appropriée. Cette mission est loin d'être celle du cinéaste amateur, du photographe ou du peintre qui se place toujours dans une optique étroitement liée à sa personne et donc subjective. C'est l'enseignement, voire l'initiation à ces technologies nouvelles qui rend la formation professionnelle des bibliothécaires conforme aux exigences des temps que nous vivons.

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Le contenu de cet enseignement devrait comprendre l'image sous toutes ses formes ; historique ou actuelle, unique ou largement diffusée ; le son : musical ou documents audio-visuels, l'artisanat.

Cet enseignement doit prendre toute son importance à côté de celui consacré à la documentation imprimée. Il doit être concret, pratique et non théorique, il doit initier les étudiants aux techniques de collecte, de conservation, de traitement formel et à l'analyse thématique des documents non-livrés.

Car ces nouvelles technologies sont meilleures que les précédentes pour la conservation et la protection de la mémoire nationale et celle de l'humanité en général

III L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE L'INFORMATIQUE DOCUMENTAIRE A L'IPSI ET A L'ISD.

Nous tirons cette présentation d'une étude recente faite par Mme Latifa GHANNOUCHI enseignante à l'IPSI et à l'ISD et présentée à une table ronde maghrébine consacrée à la D.B.A. En effet selon cette étude,

La première expérience d'enseignement de l'informatique documentaire à l'Institut Ali Bach Hamba s'intitulait "la documentation à l'aide des moyens mécaniques et semi automatiques- reprographie". Si nous n'avons pu - faute de documents - obtenir une idée sur l'importance de ces cours, nous pensons que faute de Centres de Documentation ou de Bibliothèques susceptibles de recevoir des étudiants pour un stage d'application et parce que la formation était rapide, la place faite aux nouvelles technologies ne devait pas être importante.

A l'Ecole Nationale d'Administration et jusqu'en 1978, les étudiants avaient un cours de documentation automatisée à la fin du premier cycle de deux ans et à la fin du deuxième cycle, soit 50 H sur un total de 1000 heures; l'informatique documentaire entrait ainsi dans l'enseignement avec un programme reduit certes , mais mieux structuré.

A partir de 1979 et à l'Institut de Presse et des Sciences de l'Information, un programme détaillé d'informatique documentaire a été défini et élaboré pour les étudiants de 2ème, 3ème et 4ème années. Il s'agit d'un cours sur l'informatique

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en général et l'informatique documentaire en particulier.

Les étudiants de l'Institut Supérieur de la Documentation reçoivent quant à eux une initiation à la fin de la 1ère et la 2ème année.

Parallèlement à cette évolution de l'enseignement, nous assistons à une évolution vers l'automatisation de Centres de Documentation importants comme le Centre de la Documentation Nationale (C.D.N.), le Centre National de Documentation Agricole (C.N.D.A.), et surtout à la création du Centre National de l'Informatique (C.N.I.) chargé de veiller à l'automatisation rationnelle et harmonieuse de l'Administration Tunisienne.

Les étudiants peuvent désormais "pratiquer" les nouvelles technologies grâce à ces centres entièrement ou partiellement automatisés. L'ordinateur qui envahit progressivement des secteurs importants de la vie économique du pays : Banques, Douanes, Postes, Santé Publique etc... offre ainsi aux étudiants la possibilité d'une meilleure connaissance des nouvelles technologies et ce, grâce aux visites, aux études de cas et aux stages qu'ils effectuent dans ces centres.

CONCLUSION :

Si au cours des années, les différentes expériences d'enseignement ont permis d'éclairer la voie de l'avenir par un présent mieux structuré (IPSI 4 ans et ISD 2 ans), si l'orientation des nouveaux bacheliers tend à favoriser la DBA en envoyant chaque année plus d'étudiants vers ce secteur encore vierge, nous assistons à une évolution certaine dans le domaine de l'integration des nouvelles technologies, dans les programmes de l'Université en général, de l'IPSI et de l'ISD en particulier, ce qui laisse croire que dans quelques années le pays possédera des cadres aptes à participer à l'automatisation de leurs bibliothèques et centres de documentation et d'habituer les autres à comprendre les rudiments de la technologie des ordinateurs et leurs applications aux activités des bibliothèques. Telle est est l'expérience tunisienne dans ce domaine : évolution lente mais sûre parce que mieux structurée et programmée. En somme.

Pour nous autres africains, nous ne devons ni nous cantonner dans une position de refus systematique de ces nouvelles technologies et de les introduire dans

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nos bibliothèque sous prétexte que nos priorités sont différentes, ni nous lancer dans des opérations d'automatisation ou d'acquisition de ces nouveaux moyens qui seraient coûteuses et peut-être inutiles parce que faites pour le prestige ou sur conseil d'experts qui ne sont pas au courant des vicissitudes de la réalité africaine. Mais, il est temps pour chaque pays africain de dresser un tableau de la situation de ses unités de documentation, d'élaborer les catalogues collectifs et autres outils qui manquent considèrablement aujourd'hui et de tracer une politique nationale de la documentation et de l'information programmée à court, moyen et long terme ; politique qui permettrait soit en même temps ou progressivement, la diffusion du livre et de la culture dans les villages les plus reculés, l'automatisation - quand elle est necessaire - d'unités de documentation ainsi que la formation des cadres necessaires à l'animation culturelle comme à la manipulation des nouvelles technologies./.

Abdelhamid EL AJMI